

Eldorado Canyon Fixed Hardware Application Form

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Route Name and Proposed Grade: I Can't Copeland Free (P4) (12+/13-) (5 bolts)

Location:

I Can't Copeland is on the South Buttress of Redgarden Wall. The spectacular crux aid seam of P4 is left of The Vaporizer.

Route description:

P4 of I Can't Copeland can be accessed by (1) climbing the first 3.5 pitches of The Anthill, starting on Pseudo Sidetrack (5.4 R) (2) climbing P1-3 of I Can't Copeland (5.9 R) or (3) climbing P1 of I Can't Copeland (5.9 R) into The Blunt Buttress (11-) to a short corner on P3 of I Can't Copeland (5.9) to the belay ledge at the base of the P4 aid seam. Linking into The Blunt Buttress makes for the most direct and sustained outing.

P4 of I Can't Copeland follows an right-leaning hairline seam that splits the lichen-streaked headwall at top of the South Buttress of Redgarden. It is the most obvious line when viewed from a distance. When free climbed, the pitch begins with a gear placement followed by a section of 11+ climbing spanning between twin seams off the belay past (2) bolts to a small ledge with an existing bolt on the Archer-McLanahan. There is a very questionable and optional gear placement right below this ledge. From the ledge, 10/11 climbing leads to two excellent but strenuous microcam placements followed by a bouldery 12+ crux to better holds. Climbing the slightly offset hairline seam from here to where the climbing intersects The Vaporizer at the sloping ledge is protected by (3) bolts, with bolts before and after the final crux moves (12+/13-). The bolt after the crux protects 10 climbing up and left on jugs, and also protects the follower from a swing at the crux. After the microcam placements, there are no natural gear options until the Vaporizer is reached, and the bolts would be necessary to protect against falls from the upper crux.

Other information from applicant:

I Can't Copeland has been unrepeated since it was established in 1984. The crux aid seam (P4) can no longer be climbed on RURPs and beaks (pitons) as it was during the first ascent according to Eldorado Canyon regulations. There are almost no natural gear placements, making clean aid and safe free climbing impossible, making the pitch unrepeatable in its present state. The rock quality of P4 is excellent and comparable with its neighbor The Vaporizer, with lichen being the only detractor.

Beside a couple gear placement off the belay ledge and 2 good gear placements off the small ledge mid-pitch, there are no other natural gear placements that would hold lead falls. Without protection bolts, this pitch is X-rated and falls from the difficult upper crux could result in catastrophic ledge impact.

This pitch would add a significant high quality and challenging free climb to Redgarden Wall, and resurrect a long-dormant and unrepeated aid climb to be enjoyed by Eldorado Canyon climbers.

I Can't Copeland is route # 74 on P 153 of the Levin guidebook.

Factors For

1. Is the proposed new route independent?

I Can't Copeland is a primarily independent line that crosses the Archer McInahan at a small ledge, and eventually merges with The Vaporizer near the top of that pitch. I Can't Copeland was the first route on this part of the wall, so arguably The Vaporizer merges with I Can't Copeland and the Archer-McInahan crosses I Can't Copeland at the small ledge.

2. Is the proposed new route direct?

I Can't Copeland P4 follows a direct, obvious, singular, and non-contrived natural weakness up the striking yellow-streaked headwall.

3. Is the proposed new route on good rock?

I Can't Copeland P4 is on excellent, compact rock of perfect quality, similar to that on the Vaporizer but with fewer features. There is lichen around the seam from a lack of traffic.

4. Does the overall quality of the climbing inspire?

The quality of the climbing is superb, with unique, athletic, and technical movement on perfect rock. The pitch is comparable in quality to the best pitches of the grade in Eldorado Canyon.

5. Does the proposed new route alter neighboring routes?

As proposed, P4 of I Can't Copeland has an independent and direct start and crosses P1 of the Archer-McInahan, a wandering and indirect line that was established after I Can't Copeland, and clips a bolt on that route at the small ledge. The proposed protection bolts on I Can't Copeland are

far from the neighboring routes, cannot be clipped from those routes, and exist on much more difficult terrain.

6. Is the proposed new route safe?

With the proposed protection bolts, P4 of I Can't Copeland is safe, with no dangerous fall potential.

7. Will proposed new route lead to crowding at base?

This route is near the top of Redgarden wall on a section that is rarely travelled. If anything, it will disperse climbers throughout more of the canyon by providing a high quality finishing pitch on a seldom-travelled section of wall.

Factors Against

1. Does the new route overlook natural protection in favor of bolts?

The route takes advantage of all available natural protection opportunities to minimize the use of bolts.

Neutral Factors

1. Can the proposed new route be top roped?

It is challenging, but possible to top rope P4 of I Can't Copeland either by climbing the Vaporizer and top roping from the natural gear belay at the top of that pitch, or by climbing a neighboring route or the East Slabs and downclimbing 5.6 terrain to the gear anchor at the top of the pitch. In its current state, the very limited natural protection opportunities on I Can't Copeland make for less-than-perfect but adequate directionals that can lead to some swinging at the cruxes.

Topo Photo Credit Dave Holliday

